



## ISPIRYAN FARM

*A modern and sustainable raspberry farm*

### **Identification data:**

Name: Audronė and Vahagn Ispiryan

Location: Kelmės district, Lithuania

Farm size: about 10 ha

Year established: 2004

Main activities: raspberries (fruits, leaves), strawberries

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For seventeen years, Ispiryan's family has cultivated a 9-hectare raspberry plantation in the Užventis municipality, Kelme district. For six years, their Polka variety raspberries have been certified with the National Quality Label. Audronė (with her husband Vahagn) grows raspberries on her grandparents' land in Ispiryan because they are delicious and can be used for food and cosmetics. The raspberries grown on Ispiryan's farm are sold fresh, and a large part of them is sold frozen. Modern IQF freezing technology is used (very fast freezing at -45 degrees). Once thawed, these berries do not shrivel but retain their shape – perfect for confectionery and culinary applications. The raspberries are also pureed on the farm, and the pits left over from the pureeing process are used to make valuable products for food enrichment. Another product produced on the farm is dried raspberry leaves for tea. The idea of processing the berries came to Audrone Ispiryan to reduce food waste and spoilage and increase the range of products available to consumers. The farm has a strong focus on waste-free production, so it was looking for ways to use the tonnes of useful waste from juicing and pureeing. This led to the launch of an innovative product, raspberry seed oil. Ideas and the desire to change for the better are also essential to Ispiryan.

Grown raspberries and strawberries are certified by the national quality label; family also produce 100% purees, teas, sauces, jams from berries grown. At the beginning of the work, the farm was organic. Raspberry seeds are extracted. The most 'green' processing method in Lithuania is used. No solvents are used. As a result, the process takes a long time. Their raspberry seed oil won a gold medal for its innovative product. It is very beneficial for health and can be one of the guarantees of farm viability and sustainability.

The Ispiryan farm is a successful agro-tourism farm, where you can come and pick berries on the farm. This is a very popular service because people like to combine pleasure with benefits: to spend time in a quiet, beautiful environment and at the same time pay a lower price for the berries they pick.

It has benefited from EU support and has modern refrigeration chambers.

From the very beginning of the farm, Audronė Ispiryan has been in contact and collaboration with scientists at the Institute of Horticulture and Gardening of the Lithuanian Centre of Agrarian and Forestry Sciences (LAMMC). She and her husband's initiative led to the establishment of the Lithuanian Association of Berry Growers, Processors and Traders, which is not a common one. There is no membership or annual fee. The most important thing is to have ideas and a desire to change for the better. Members of the Association, for example, talk to the government about the proposed solutions. Members can also share their markets; they can cooperate in management activities. The Association also has very close links with scientific institutions.

Strawberries have also been introduced in recent years, and other berries are planned to be included. The plan is to develop zero-waste technologies and the circular economy further.

**Photos:**



**Audrone and Vahagn Ispiryan's 8 ha raspberry orchard**

(Source: <https://manoukis.lt/naujienos/ukis/uogu-augintojai-raginami-jungtis-nes-tai-naudinga>)